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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. Source states that the plans for staging a coup d'etat in Syria which were worked out by Lieutenant Colonel Bashur,** Deputy Commander of the Third Brigade, had no connection with the military coup which took place on 19 December 1949. He states that:
- Plans for the 19 December coup were drawn up only a few days prior to the action, although several groups have been toying with the idea for the past two months. The plot took shape only when developments in the Constituent Assembly indicated that plans for the union of Syria with Iraq were about to become a serious threat.
 - Lieutenant Colonel Bashur had no part in the earlier plottings of these groups, nor in the present coup.
 - Druze leader Amin Abu Assaf was in on the coup from its inception, and there never was any reason to doubt that he favored the plans.
 - Fawzi Silu, rather than 'Abdullah Atfi, was the logical replacement for Sami Hinnawi, since Silu is the highest ranking enemy of Hinnawi and is known to be against union with Iraq. Source adds that Adib Shishakli was a natural choice to lead a coup, inasmuch as it was his unit, the First Brigade, which was needed to take over Damascus.
2. The reception given to leaders of the coup by Hashim Atasi was stiffer than expected, source states, and the Army leaders accordingly protested more strongly than they had intended that the military action was not an attempt to interfere in politics.
3. The suggested list of Cabinet members** was not drawn up by Army leaders, but by a "Republican League" formed by the following deputies, who will work to become the new guiding influence in the Government: Akram Haurani, Sami Tayarrah, Issam Iuhayri, Ihsan Husni, 'Abd-al-Baqi Hizan-al-Din, Sa'id Ishaq, and 'Abd-al-Salam Haydar. Ahmad Azm is the compromise leader who has been asked to form the Cabinet.

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4. Army leaders are concerned over the possibility that Iraqi or Jordanian troops may march on Damascus, and have sent Army units to the borders as a defense measure.
5. Ibrahim Husayni has been reinstalled as Chief of the Syrian Deuxieme Bureau.

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*	[REDACTED]	<u>Comment.</u>	See	[REDACTED]	issued on 16 November 1949.
**	[REDACTED]	<u>Comment.</u>	See	[REDACTED]	issued on 21 December 1949.

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